

TITLE: WHERE NO ONE STANDS ALONE (The Promises of God)

TEXT: ROMANS 8:28-39

INTRO: We've all felt alone at times. One of our songs says, "but I don't know a thing in this whole wide world that's worse than being alone." God understands this, and has made us a wonderful promise in this regard in Rom 8. Rom 7 distinguishes between law & Spirit (Mosaic law & Christ's law). Living under the Mosaic law leads to death, whereas Christ's law leads to life. Rom 8 then addresses those living under Christ's law (i.e., in the Spirit). These are the people to whom these promises are given.

I. GOD'S PEOPLE CALLED (v. 28-30):

- A. (v. 28) All things work together for good – what good? Good results in general? No...salvation. This is the context (v. 28-30).
- B. (v. 29) Verses 29-30 are about the ones "called" in v. 28.
 - 1. Those God foreknew (knew them before they were) He also predestined (foreordain, decide beforehand). Were individual people predestined to be Christians? No! A *type* of person was predestined.
 - 2. These people were 'appointed beforehand' *to be conformed to the image of His Son*. To do this or not is a *decision* each person makes. God has chosen beforehand (before time began) that those going to Heaven would be the **group of people** who will decide to be conformed.
 - 3. God did not hand pick me before I was born to be a part of this group. Had he done this, where would freewill be? Why give us the Bible to teach us how to conform and the requirement of conforming? If he's already caused me to be this way and given me no choice, while causing another to be lost, then why the Bible? Neither of us needs it!
- C. (v. 30) The complete process:
 - 1. Those He predestined, He also called (invited). We are called by the gospel (**2 Thess 2:14**). And ALL are called/invited:
 - a. **Rom 1:16** – "I am not ashamed of the gospel... for it is the power of God unto salvation to *everyone* that believe."
 - b. **Titus 2:11** – "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto *all* men..."
 - c. **1 Tim 2:6** – "Who gave himself a ransom for *all*..."
 - 2. Those He called, He also justified (to render righteous; just-if-I'd never sinned). Justification requires obedience (**Heb 5:9**).
 - 3. Those He justified...glorified (ultimate glorification w/Christ in Heaven). This is the good to which all things work (v. 28).

II. GOD'S PEOPLE BLESSED (v. 31-39):

- A. (v. 31-32) **Promise of God's provision**
 - 1. (v. 31) What shall we say to these things (that God has called, justified, & glorified His people)? He then answers his question: "If God be for us (lit. "on our behalf"), who can be against us?" This is a guarantee!
 - 2. (v. 32) He gave us His son (the greatest gift He could ever give)...why would he refuse to give us anything else we need?
- B. (v. 33-34) **Promise of Christ's intercession**

Who will accuse a Christian? *God* is the judge & justifier (declares one righteous or not). He's just said that he's justified His people (v. 30); who can reverse this judgment? So don't worry about what others say about you, or what they can do to you. Can they condemn you? No! *Christ* is the one who condemns, since He is at God's right hand as intercessor. We may suffer in this life, but if we're obedient, Christ will be our "lawyer" before God.
- C. (v. 35-39) **Promise of love & victory (in an unbreakable relationship)**
 - 1. (v. 35) Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Here is the thesis for v. 35-39, and the answer is **nothing!**
 - a. To whom is this promise made? "Us" – v. 1-"those who are in Christ Jesus"; v. 28-"them that love God," & "called"; v. 29-those "conformed to the image of his Son."
 - b. Can any of these things, that happen even to Christians (especially Christians), actually remove us from Christ's love?
 - c. These things can separate you from *earthly* relationships, which are usually conditional. Not so with God!
 - 2. (v. 36) The understood answer to Paul's question in v. 35 is **No!** Paul then says that these things *are* a part of Christianity! Quoting Ps 44:22, Paul applies it to Christianity. "For thy sake (for the name of Christ) we are killed all the day long (a seemingly never-ending persecution of Christians). *These things happen to us, but does it separate us from Christ's love? **NO! Jesus will never abandon us!**
 - 3. (v. 37) Rather than being separated, in all this we're more than conquerors ("gain a decisive victory"). The physical loss is more than compensated for in the spiritual. Not only are we **not** dissuaded from professing Christianity (physical victory), are ultimate victory is in Heaven, with Christ interceding (v. 34).
 - 4. (v. 38-39a) Now Paul answers his own question from v. 35, this time even clearer. List of things that **can't** separate us....
 - a. Neither death nor life (this covers all)! Paul explained in 1 Thess 4:16 that "*the dead in Christ shall rise first.*"
 - b. Angels – Is Paul saying that angels would do this? The point is that **nothing**, not even angels, can separate us...
 - c. Principalities, powers (ability; power of wealth; miraculous)- Even miraculous abilities (from Satan) are unable...
 - d. Things present or things to come – a general statement that covers *all* possibilities
 - e. Height nor depth – again, a general reference to two extremes, covering *all* possibilities
 - f. Nor any other creature (created thing) – This list is **exhaustive!** Nothing or nobody in Creation can separate us from...
 - 5. (v. 39b) Some use this to support O.S.A.S. Yet...
 - a. The one thing missing from this list is YOU! You *can* separate yourself if you choose. Christianity is always a choice.
 - b. To whom is Paul speaking? v. 1-those in Christ Jesus, v. 28-them that love God, v. 29-those conformed to the image...
 - c. This is a promise of a salvational, redemptive love and it's based on our obedience to Him.

CONCLUSION: God gives us amazing promises in Rom 8. We did not earn these gifts, but are promised them as long as we are faithful to Him. These promises guarantee us a relationship that cannot end, the faithfulness of a friend who will always be there for us in spite of the troubles we will face as Christians. Because of this, we should have the encouragement to live faithful lives for Him who is by our side always.